Places of Historic Interest and Beauty in the Garden of the Six Nations

Mansfield State Normal Quarterly

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Camping Site Provided by the State in the Black Forest

The Hunter's Paradise in Potter County

Pine Creek Gorge in Summer

Places of Historic Interest and Beauty in the Garden of the Six Nations

In the long ago, the Great Spirit made hunting grounds for his children the Red Men. These he protected by great natural barriers so that they would be safe from intrusion. To the Seneca Indians, of the Six Nations, he assigned the district that now constitutes the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania and the Southern Tier of New York State. In 1792 when Williamson penetrated this region, there were 27,000,000 acres upon which no white man dwelt. The entire surface was heavily timbered with pine and hemlock. The ravines, through which streams of crystal water dashed, were filled with a dense growth of vines, briars and underbrush, impenetrable, save only to the Indians and wild animals.

Game of all kinds abounded—elk, deer and bear in great numbers. The wolf, fox, wild cat, and smaller animals were everywhere. The streams were filled with trout and other fish. The Senecas pitched their hunting lodges in the mountains and their wigwams on the banks of the streams.

Indian paths crossed and recrossed—too numerous to relate, for the unerring judgment of these children of the forest led them by the shortest routes, whether to attack their enemy or to find game. A most important one intersected the great Sheshequin path along the Lycoming Creek, ran straight north through the gap of the mountain barrier at Trout Run, followed the Tioga River passing through what are now Blossburg, Covington, Canoe Camp, Mansfield, Tioga and Lawrenceville to Painted Post. This path,

in 1792, became the Williamson Road, one of the notable achievements of the times, and in 1922 the Susquehanna Trail, one of the finest pieces of road engineering of the present day.

To Sir William Pultney, of Bath, England, had been granted 1,250,000 acres in the "Genesee Country". This grant was the hunting ground of the Senecas, bordering the Garden of the Six Nations. He, in turn, commissioned Col. Williamson, a Scotchman and former officer in the British Army, to conduct 200 immigrants and their families through the wilderness and to establish a permanent colony at what became Bath, N. Y. This task he performed with the courage and endurance of a pioneer, in spite of mutinies and threats against his life when provisions ran low, cutting his way through an impenetrable forest of 100 miles, following the Seneca warpath. At a point along the Tioga (near what is now Mansfield) where an east and west trail crossed the party became mutinous and sought to return. Winter was coming on; provisions and supplies were becoming exhausted. The resourcefulness of the leader was critically tested, but he met the emergency with the firmness and faith that he displayed on many subsequent occasions. He secretly sent one of his guides, Robert Patterson, forty miles through the wilderness to Tioga Point (Athens), which was one of the outposts of civilization, to secure sugar, coffee and flour; and he put his force of wood cutters to work felling the large trees that grew at this place. From these he hurriedly made canoes (hence the name Canoe Camp), in which they floated down the river to Apple Island, near Painted Post, arriving just as Patterson hove in sight on the Chemung River with his canoe laden with eatables. A great feast and jollification followed, and the jubilant immigrants proceeded to their destination. Sometime previous to this, at Peter's Camp (Blossburg) Robert and Benjamin Patterson, the guides, discovered coal which the English immigrants called "stone coal", or "black rock", to distinguish it from charcoal or wood coal.

Etching of a Scene of the Early Days in Building the Williamson Road

Along the way Williamson erected blockhouses as shelter and protection. The one on Blockhouse Run (Liberty) was to play an important part in the

The old Blockhouse built by Col. Williamson in 1792, as conceived and sketched by Dr. Will George Butler. Note the bake-oven in the foreground.

events that followed. It remained until recent years as a famous historic landmark. In 1793, one Anthonyson, a half breed, French and Dutch, took possession of the Blockhouse, and used it as a tavern. According to his own story, he had spent most of his life as a soldier, during the sorry times of the French Revolution; and he thereby neither improved his morals nor his fortune. He had no scruple, by way of amusing his guests, of boasting of his bare-faced villainy. There was no one of the ten commandments which he had not specifically broken time and again. With the habits of the old soldier, he had little disposition to get his living by tilling the ground; and found the military mode of pillage much more to his taste. He raised no oats, but always charged travelers for the use of his troughs, and for sleeping before his fire. Whiskey was the staple commodity at his home, serving as meat and drink. Many of the early immigrants to the Genesee country drove their young cattle along. There was a wide track of some fearful tornado not far from his house, in which he contrived to cut an open space with a narrow passage into it, making a kind of unseen pen. To this spot the cattle of his guests were apt to stray in the night. In the morning the

Nest of Ruffed Grouse

poor immigrants were hunting far and near for their cattle, with Anthonyson for their guide; but on such occasion he never happened to think of the windfall.

The unsuspecting guests, after two or three days of fruitless search, would leave, paying roundly for their detention, and instructing the scoundrel to hunt the cattle and when found to write to a certain address, with a promise of reward for his trouble. Anthonyson never had occasion to write; but it was always remarked that he kept his smoke house well supplied with what he called elk meat. When or where he caught the elks was never known. Some lone travelers, who stopped at his house, it is strongly suspected, never reached their intended destination.

When Williamson reached Bath, his plans were yet to develop. He was so elated over the success of his enterprise that he resolved on having some kind of jubilee at his wilderness home. He constructed a rude theatre for nightly plays during the period of the festivities. A race track was built. He issued circulars and handbills, inviting the citizens from Boston to Richmond to come and enjoy the sports. He advertised the natural advantages of a home in the Garden of the Six Nations. He stationed trusted guides in all the leading cities "to meet and conduct gentlemen and their suites to his far famed city upon the waters of the upper Susquehanna."

His was indeed a daring project in a wilderness where the savage still skulked; but the adventure and romance of the proposition made an appeal. For weeks the Williamson Road was a procession of travelers. They came from the far south with their negro slaves. The races were in September, 1796, and lasted for several weeks. Among the famous horses entered were Virginia Nell and Silk Stocking. The former was the choice of Maryland and Virginia; the latter, the winner, was backed by New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Canada.

The princely entertainments of the host furnished the theme of conversation for years, and widely advertised the new city.

Campfire Girls at the Harrison Cottage on Pine Creek

A few years ago a number of beavers were imported from Algonquin Park to Asaph Run. These have now become a large colony. The accompanying photographs show the dam; also a maple tree 20 inches in diameter, which the beavers are cutting. They failed to read the notice posted on the tree: "Do Not Disturb."

Down Normal Hill on Skiis

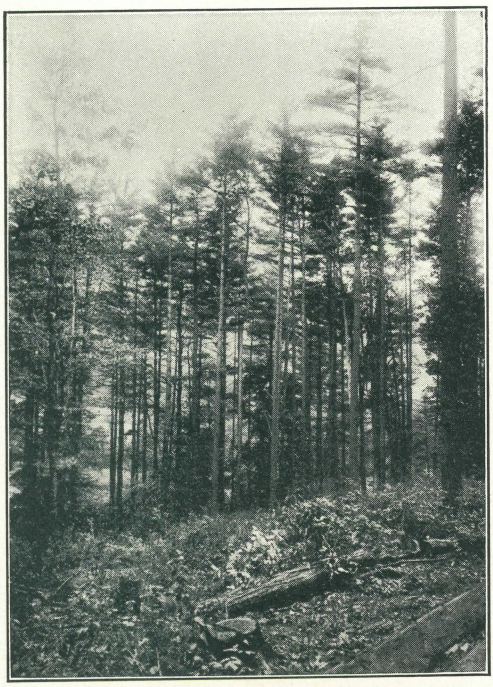
The Ole Bull "Castle" as conceived and sketched by Dr. Will George Butler, of the Mansfield State Normal faculty, who has given much study to the Norwegian violinist. Dr. Butler is the composer of "The Visions of Oleona."

Kettle Creek, Near Ole Bull Castle

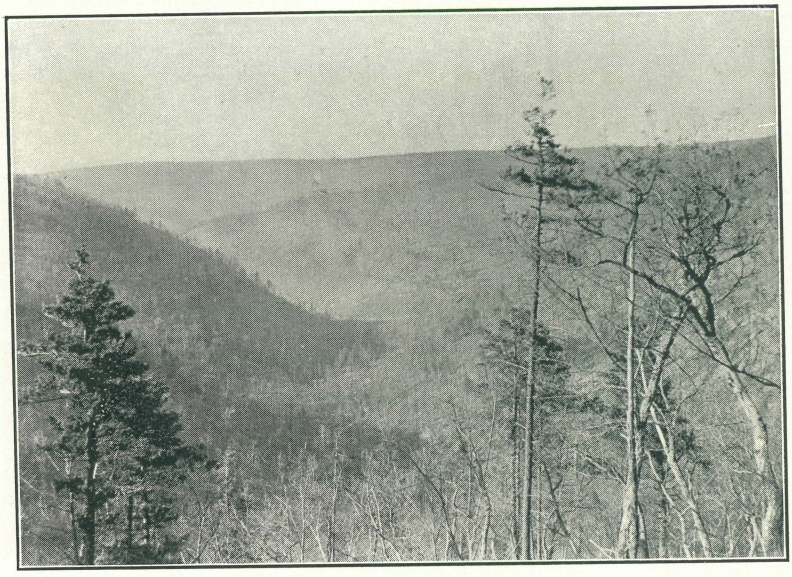
Dr. Will George Butler, playing his composition, "Visions of Oleona," on the site of Ole Bull's Castle.

Famous Norwegian Violinist Founded Colony in Black Forest

In 1852, Ole Bull, the world famous Norwegian violinist, purchased 125,000 acres of rugged mountain land, in the heart of the Black Forest. Potter county, on which to locate a colony of his countrymen. He brought to this region 800 Norwegians, and commenced the erection of several towns to be called New Bergen, Oleona, Valhalla, and New Norway. His own "Castle" was erected on a high cliff overlooking the waters of Kettle Creek. Owing to financial difficulties the colony failed, and all that now remains are the castle walls upon which, on clear days, fly the flags of the United States and Norway. This spot is now a State Park and camp ground, visited by thousands of tourists. Dr. Will George Butler, famous vilionist and composer, of the music faculty of the Mansfield State Normal School, has perpetuated the memory of Ole Bull and his dream in "The Visions of Oleona". In the accompanying photograph Dr. Butler is seen playing his composition on his violin at the ruins of the castle to a group of friends. On Kettle Creek, below, hundreds of tourists heard the refrain—the tribute of a master artist.



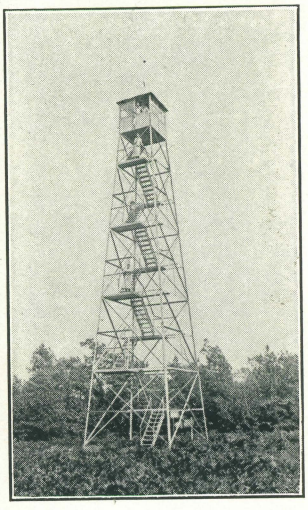
The photo above shows some of the virgin forest of the northern tier, being some of the original hemlock. The photo at the side shows a stand of second growth native pine.



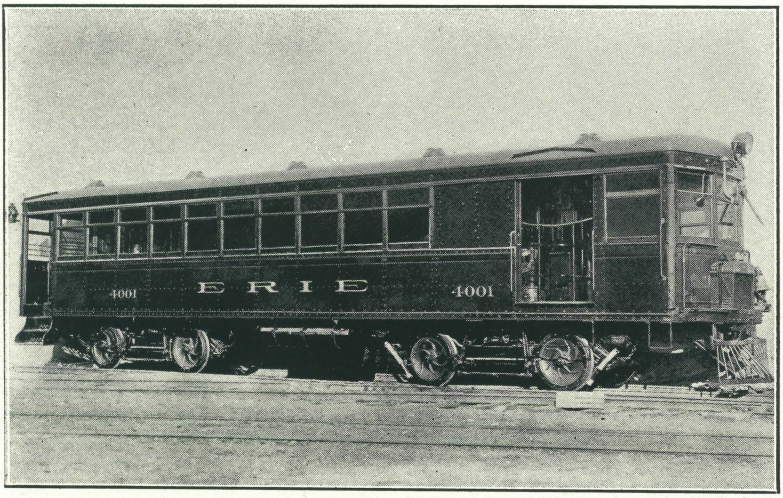
Everyday Scenery in the Northern Tier

The Northern Tier

The Northern Tier counties, the district of the Mansfield State Normal School, have many such beautiful scenes as are shown in this booklet. Potter is a land of wild forests, and massive mountains, and attractive streams; Tioga has the gorges of Pine Creek and thousands of acres of State Forests. Bradford has mountains and streams and lakes. Mountain Lake, near Troy, is an undeveloped spot of natural beauty, with wonderful possibilities as a summer resort. Susquehanna and Wyoming have hundreds of beautiful lakes in the mountains—a summer paradise. Lycoming and Sullivan counties are famous for their rugged peaks and beautiful streams. The Susquehanna Trail (the old Williamson Road) pierces this country North and South; and the great East–West highway (recently named the Roosevelt Highway and under construction), from the Delaware river to Lake Erie, crosses the Susquehanna Trail and the Horseshoe Trail at Mansfield, so that the traveler by automobile passes through, and always within sight of, a natural paradise —a part of the Garden of the Six Nations. Along these highways, or very close to them, are camping sites provided by the State as a playground for the public.

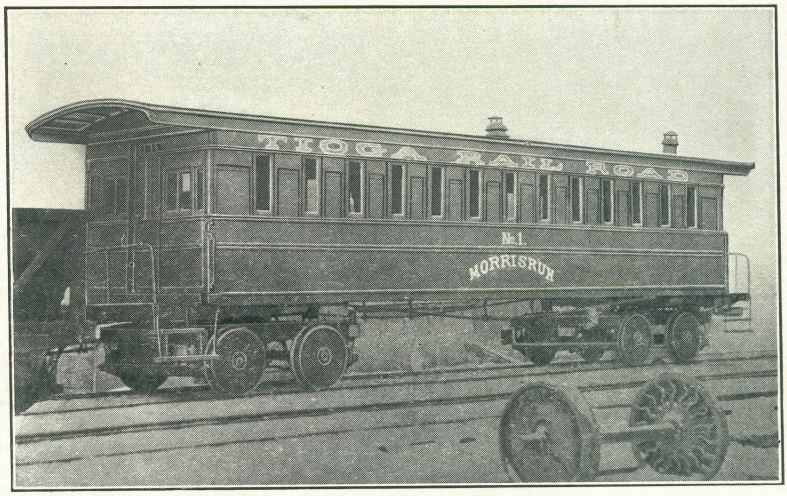


A Fire Tower in a State Forest



The Modern Motor Car Which the Erie Will Soon Place on the Tioga Division.

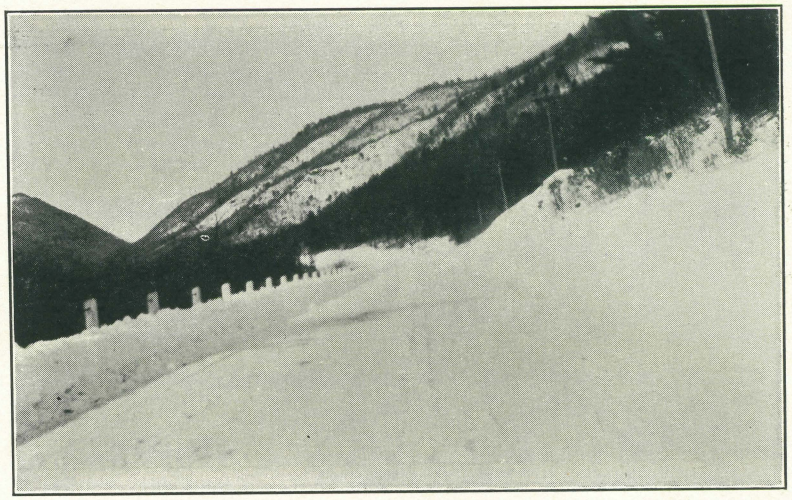
Interior of modern coach contemplated for use on the Erie.



The first closed coach operated on the Tioga Division of the Erie, the second oldest railroad in the United States.

Compare this coach with the modern railway car on the opposite page.

It is also interesting to think of this coach of the olden days in connection with the photo at the bottom, which shows the Susquehanna Trail kept open for motor traffic even during the heavy snows of winter. This view shows the road through the mountains after a heavy fall of snow, during which a motor truck with snowplow attached was sent back and forth over the road to keep the snow from drifting.



A Portion of the Normal Grounds and Buildings From an Airplane

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Favorite Camp Site of Nessmuk, the Poet of the Northern Tier

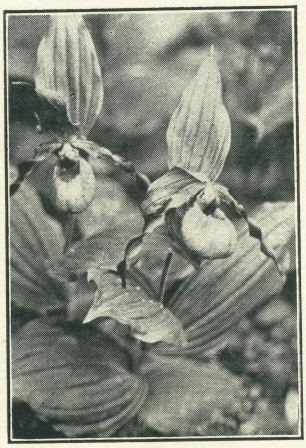
Mountain Lake

Places of Interest Within Easy Drive of Mansfield State Normal

Watkins Glen at Watkins, N. Y.; Home of Mark Twain, Elmira, N. Y.; Ice Mine (only in summer) Coudersport, Pa.; Tioga Point, Athens, Pa.; Smythe Park, Mansfield; Tyoga Country Club, Wellsboro; Coal Mines Blossburg; Tannery, Westfield; Beaver Dam on Asaph Run, near Wellsboro; Pine Creek, near Wellsboro; Pleasure Rock, near Mansfield; Mountain Lake, between Towanda and Troy; Ole Bull Castle, near Coudersport.

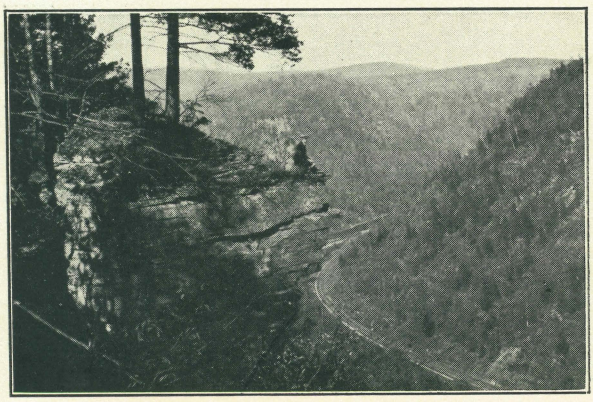
Another Favorite Spot of Nessmuk

Falls of Four Mile Run in Winter



Yellow Lady Slipper

On the Normal Tennis Courts



Looks Like the Grand Canyon, but it is Pine Creek Gorge

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